

REMARKS

Claims 1, 8, 12, 14, 16, 18, and 21 are pending. Claims 19 and 20 were previously withdrawn pursuant to a requirement for restriction. Claims 2-7, 9-11, 13, 15, and 17 have been cancelled. Claims 1, 8, 12, 14, and 16 have been amended. Claim 21 is a new claim. No new matter has been introduced. Claims 1 and 21 are independent claims. Reconsideration and allowance of the above-referenced application are respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 4, 8, 12, 14, 16, and 18 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. This indication of allowable subject matter is acknowledged.

In this response, claim 1 is amended to recite the subject matter of claims 1, 2, 3, and 4. Thus, claim 1 is claim 4 re-written in independent form. Because claim 4 was indicated as being allowable if re-written in independent form, claim 1 is allowable.

35 U.S.C. §§ 102 & 103

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Ivony (US 4,143,676). Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ivony in view of Vickers (US 2,182,459). Claim 3 is rejected as being unpatentable over Ivony in view of Vickers and further in view of North (US 2,946,348). Claim 5 is rejected as being unpatentable over Ivony in view of Bonney (US 3,774,634). Claim 6 is rejected as being unpatentable over Ivony in view of Vickers and further in view of Bonney. Claim 7 is rejected as being unpatentable over Ivony in view of Vickers and North, and further in view of Bonney. Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ivony in view of Hayasaka (US 5,301,922). Claim 10 is rejected as being unpatentable over Ivony in view of Vickers and further in view of Hayasaka. Claim 11 is rejected as being unpatentable over Ivony in view of Vickers and North, and further in view of Hayasaka. Claims 13, 15, and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §

103(a) as being unpatentable over Ivory in view of Vickers, North, Bonney, and Hayasaka. The amendments to the claims, as listed previously, obviate the rejections for the following reasons.

The cancellation of claims 2-7, 9-11, 13, and 15 obviate the rejections of these claims.

Claim 1 is amended to include the features of claims 2, 3, and 4. Pursuant to the amendment, claims 2, 3, and 4 are cancelled. As explained previously, claim 1 is allowable because the claim recites features of allowable claim 4.

Claim 21 recites the features of claims 1, 3, and 4. Claim 21 is patentable because none of the references, Ivory, Vickers, North, Bonney, or Hayasaka, taken alone or in any combination describe or suggest all the features of this claim.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the remarks made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

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Respectfully submitted,

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